

Woodbury City Update

July 2021 • Volume 22, No. 6



Celebrate 'Night to Unite' Aug. 3

Woodbury neighborhoods are invited to join cities throughout the state on Tuesday, Aug. 3, in observing Minnesota's "Night to Unite."

"Night to Unite presents a unique opportunity to establish stronger connections between our Woodbury Public Safety staff and neighborhoods we serve," said Public Safety Director Lee Vague. "This creates better safety awareness, trust and a more welcoming community."

There are many ways to celebrate as a neighborhood. Get together for a potluck dinner, ice cream social, barbecue, bike parade, or children's games. If you are a regular participant at the yearly block parties, invite a new neighbor to the celebration or challenge yourself to meet someone new at this year's event.

Registering your event with the Public Safety Department is not necessary. However, if you would like Public Safety staff and vehicles to visit your party, you may invite Public Safety to your Night to Unite party. Visit woodburymn.gov/NightToUnite.

Due to the increase in requests for Police/Fire/EMS visits at this time of year, requests must be submitted by July 23. Staff will confirm availability five days prior to the event. If you do not have access to the Internet, call the

Woodbury Public Safety Department at 651-714-3600.

Visits from public safety personnel will occur on Night to Unite between 6 and 8:30 p.m. as time allows.

Planning tips and other event information can be accessed on the Woodbury website at the website listed above. Questions regarding Night to Unite can be directed to police@woodburymn.gov or by calling the phone number listed above.

Back to School Gift Card Drive

This year, Public Safety staff will be collecting gift cards (grocery, Target, Walmart and fuel) from block parties on Night to Unite to be distributed to South Washington County and Woodbury families in need of supplies and other necessities for the upcoming school year.

Gift cards can also be dropped off at the Woodbury Public Safety Building, 2100 Radio Drive, between the hours of 8 and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Night to Unite is sponsored by the Minnesota Crime Prevention Association, AAA of Minnesota/Iowa, and local law enforcement agencies.

New playgrounds, courts and trails coming!

If you've been outside enjoying the many parks and trails around Woodbury, you may have noticed some changes happening with certain amenities and playgrounds. Below are some park improvement projects taking place this summer.

Valley Creek Park

Valley Creek Park is an undeveloped 70-acre community park located off Valley Creek Road near the intersection of Settlers Ridge Parkway.

The top three priorities of the project include restoring natural resource habitat, providing paved and unpaved trails, and adding adventure/nature play space.

Phase I of construction began in mid-June and will include work on an entrance road, parking lot, play space and paved trails in the southern portion of the park, with natural resource, wayfinding and project restoration continuing for a few years. The new amenities in the park are expected to open to the public this fall.

In addition, the city is working with the Woodbury Heritage Society (WHS) on preservation and stabilization of the existing Miller Barn, a fixture on the property. A Legacy Grant from the State of Minnesota and WHS will financially support the work on Miller Barn.

Fair Haven Park (previously Bailey Lake Park)

This new park, to be located south of Dale Road and west of Woodbury Drive, will include a playground for ages 5-12, multi-purpose open/active field space, basketball court, tennis/pickleball court and trail connections.

An entrance road and parking lot will not be constructed with this phase of

the project as originally considered. With three trail entrances to the park providing bicycle and pedestrian access, there is limited need for vehicle access. Staff will monitor the need for an entrance road and parking lot and consider adding these components in a future year, if the park use can justify the additional infrastructure.

Construction is slated to begin later this summer and be completed in October.

Summerlin Park

This new park, also located south of Dale Road and west of Woodbury Drive, includes a tot-lot play structure designed for children age 5 and under, and a small active space off Summerlin Drive. Construction is expected to begin in August and be completed in October.

In addition to new parks, the following improvements will be made to the existing parks and trails system this summer.

Parking lot reconstruction

- **Shawnee Park** boat launch (and lighting improvements)
- **Evergreen West Park** (and stormwater structure improvements)
- **Pioneer Park** (and stormwater structure improvements)

Court reconstruction

- **Pioneer Park** expansion and conversion of the existing tennis court to four pickleball courts and one tennis court, new basketball standards, and new pavement for all courts.

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Council Perspective

By Mayor Anne Burt

Environmental stewardship is critical to our success

For many years, the city has identified a list of critical success factors that we must perform well in order to remain and develop as a desirable living and working community. In Woodbury, these factors are safety, quality of life, business climate, youth development and education, city services and environmental stewardship.

To preserve our environment for future generations, the city fosters environmental stewardship through focused conservation, social responsibility and best management practices. Our progress is shared in the Green Times newsletter insert three times per year, including inside this edition, and through our video partners at the South Washington County Telecommunications Commission (SWC-TV Channels 16 and 18, swctc.org and youtube.com/cityofwoodburymn).

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of our biggest efforts and successes as environmental stewards.

Minnesota GreenStep Cities

Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a voluntary challenge, assistance and recognition program that helps cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. In May 2020, Woodbury was recognized for the third consecutive year for advancing to a Step 4 and 5 city in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program, which is the highest step offered in the program. To maintain Step 5 recognition, cities must improve in any three of the eligible metric elements each year - we improved in 12. Woodbury is among 25 Minnesota cities recognized for achieving Step 5 based on 2020 data.

Community solar

Since January 2017, the city has received credits on its Xcel Energy bills based on electricity produced from community solar gardens (CSGs) located in Dakota, Chisago, and Washington Counties. A CSG is a centralized solar photovoltaic

system that produces electricity for subscribers. The program allows the city an opportunity to save on electricity bills, while supporting the development of renewable energy in Minnesota.

The city has a number of Community Solar Garden (CSG) subscriptions associated with nearly 50 electric meters, which are assigned to 37 different solar gardens. The agreements were first initiated in January 2017, and have secured direct savings to the city of \$396,000 through April 2021.

Solar installations and renewable energy in the community

In addition to the city's CSG subscriptions, a 40-kilowatt solar array is installed at the city's Public Safety Building, and a solar thermal array is located on the south side of HealthEast Sports Center. Staff is also evaluating the potential for a solar array to be installed on the roof of the city's Fleet Services Building.

To further promote solar installations within the community, the city hosted a number of events to promote the investment and support of renewable energy, and has developed an alternative energy systems ordinance to promote the use of alternative energy sources and help guide residents and businesses through the process. According to a recent Xcel Energy report, nearly 1,600 Woodbury residents and businesses have either installed solar, or support renewable energy through Xcel programs.

Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles

The city's vehicle fleet provides an opportunity to reduce fuel use through the transition to purchasing and utilizing more efficient vehicles. In 2020, the city expanded the number of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) from six to eight vehicles. The PHEVs are used by utility, building inspections and public safety

staff. The city's fleet also includes five electric vehicles used for parks maintenance and seven hybrid vehicles. In 2020, the city installed a Level 2 electric vehicle (EV) charging station at its Fleet Services Building and in 2022, EV charging stations will be installed at City Hall to charge EVs within the city's fleet.

According to Xcel Energy, the number of public EV charging stations installed in the city increased from 11 stations in 2019 to 28 stations in 2020.

Water efficiency programs

Water efficiency is one of our strategic priorities. One program that is scheduled to continue through 2025 is the smart irrigation controller program. The city offers Rachio irrigation controllers at a discounted price for residential properties that do not currently have a smart irrigation controller. Since the pilot program in 2016, more than 2,800 Water Sense Certified controllers have been installed in Woodbury homes, saving approximately 84 million gallons of water each year.

The city also offers a cost-share water efficiency program for commercial properties and homeowner associations that started in 2017. Approved projects can receive 50 percent funding assistance for up to \$8,000 for eligible improvements. Through 2020, 62 properties have participated in the program, saving an estimated 13.4 million gallons of water thus far, and are estimated to save more than 3 million gallons of water per year going forward.

Home Energy Squad visits

Since July 2018, the city has partnered with a local nonprofit, Center for Energy and Environment (CEE), to offer discounted Home Energy Squad (HES) "Enhanced" visits, valued at \$600 to Woodbury homeowners for just \$70.

Each visit includes the installation of LED light bulbs, weather-stripping, a programmable thermostat, high efficiency faucet aerators and showerheads, and an insulated water heater blanket. Homeowners may also receive recommendations on the home's potential for additional efficiency upgrades.

Since 2019, CEE has conducted 653 home visits in Woodbury, which includes free visits to income-qualified households and those subsidized by the city.

How you can help

If you would like to support the city's sustainability efforts, consider installing a Water-sense certified smart irrigation controller on your - or your homeowners association's irrigation system. Learn more at woodburymn.gov/smartirrigation.

To learn more about sustainability programs, including features such as green roofs, energy conservation, and geothermal systems for heating and cooling, installed at our public buildings, visit woodburymn.gov/sustainability. In addition, our 2040 Comprehensive Plan is a valuable resource to review the city's goals and future implementation plans regarding sustainability. Check it out at woodburymn.gov/plan2040.

The Woodbury newsletter is published 10 times per year by the City of Woodbury and mailed to all residents and businesses. Send comments to: Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury, MN 55125-3330. Phone: 651-714-3500. Email: jason.egerstrom@woodburymn.gov.

Mayor: Anne Burt. Council Members: Andrea Date, Steve Morris, Jennifer Santini and Kim Wilson. City Administrator: Clint Gridley. Communications Manager: Jason Egerstrom.

The City of Woodbury is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In accordance with the act, the Woodbury newsletter is available in other formats. Call Jason Egerstrom, 651-714-3500; TDD: 651-714-3568.

Enter the annual photo contest sponsored by *Woodbury Magazine*

Help the City of Woodbury showcase the community and its residents by submitting photos in the 23rd annual Focus on Woodbury Photo Contest.

The competition, sponsored by *Woodbury Magazine*, drew 223 entries last year. It is open to all residents and employees of Woodbury businesses to submit their favorite photos.

Contest categories

Images must be captured in Woodbury, and can be placed into one of five categories:

- People - people living, working and enjoying themselves in the community
- Events - community gatherings, sporting events, etc.
- Landmarks - businesses, buildings and cityscapes
- Nature - plants, parks, animals in nature, natural landscapes
- Pets - domestic animals

Woodbury Magazine readers will have the opportunity to vote in September for the Readers' Choice winner.

Woodbury Magazine reserves the right to move a photo into a different category than specified on the entry

form, if the judges deem it appropriate, or disqualify an image.

How to enter

Contest entries must be submitted online at woodburymag.com between Aug. 1 and Aug. 31. On the website, select the "Focus on Woodbury" photo contest article and complete the short form with required fields. Each individual may submit a maximum of five entries, but no more than three in any one category.

Contestants must follow all rules or their entry will be disqualified. See contest rules and guidelines at woodburymag.com/focus-woodbury-2021-photo-contest.

Winners of the photo contest will be announced in early October and entrant photos displayed online in September.

First place winners and runners-up will be announced for each category. First place entries will be published in the city newsletter. Selected photos also will be published in *Woodbury Magazine*.

Direct questions to Hailey Almsted, editor of *Woodbury Magazine*, at hailey.almsted@tigeroak.com.

Focus on Woodbury Photo Contest rules and guidelines

- Entrants must live, work or attend school in Woodbury.
- Photos must be taken in Woodbury between Sept. 1, 2020, and Aug. 31, 2021.
- Each photo entry must include an online submission including the photographer's name, address, phone number and email address; age (if under 18); intended category for the photo and title of the photo.
- Photo submissions that do not include the required contact information will not be considered.
- Photo submissions with professional logos or watermarks will not be considered.
- Photos must be submitted through woodburymag.com. Files must be less than 2 MB in size to be considered.
- Participants must have permission from any persons pictured in the photo to use that photo and permission of a parent in the case of minors. Subject permissions must be obtained before submitting photos to the Focus on Woodbury Photo Contest. *Woodbury Magazine* is not responsible for obtaining subject permissions.
- Photos may be reproduced by the magazine and the City of Woodbury.
- Once submitted, the entrant grants publishing rights (both print and digital) to *Woodbury Magazine* as well as the City of Woodbury.
- Each individual may submit a total of five photos.
- Contest organizers reserve the right to disqualify or re-categorize any photo.
- Contest winners will be selected by a panel of judges assembled by *Woodbury Magazine*.
- The contest Readers' Choice winner will be selected separately by voters on *Woodbury Magazine's* website (woodburymag.com).



"Simple Summer" by Mackenzie Harding, 2021, People category winner, 3rd place

- Winners will be notified on or around Oct. 1. First place winners also will be published in the City Update newsletter.
- All decisions will be final; judges reserve the right to award a winner in any category.
- *Woodbury Magazine* will not be responsible for lost entries.
- Depending on the number of entrants, a winner may be chosen for each category as well as an overall winner. A "Readers' Choice" award may also be given based on votes received on the *Woodbury Magazine* website between Sept. 8 and Sept. 29.
- Select photographs may also be featured in future print *Woodbury Magazine* articles and promotions, as well as on *Woodbury Magazine's* website and social media pages. Photos also may be featured in City of Woodbury publications, on the city's website, and on its social media accounts.
- For more information or questions about the contest, email *Woodbury Magazine* editor Hailey Almsted at hailey.almsted@tigeroak.com. Please specify the magazine or community associated with your questions, and provide as much detail as possible.

NOTE: Contestants must follow all rules or their entry could be disqualified.

City to receive \$6.01 million through American Rescue Plan Act

In March, the U.S. Congress passed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus designed to accelerate the country's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City of Woodbury will receive \$6.01 million from the ARP stimulus. The city accepted its first payment of little more than \$3 million in May and will receive the remainder of the payment in

May 2022. The deadline for committing to spend the \$6.01 million, as outlined in the legislation, is Dec. 31, 2024.

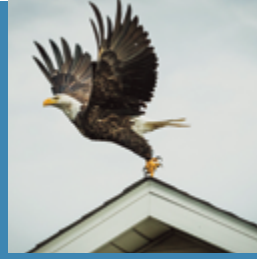
"Pending formal approval by the City Council, we expect to use these federal dollars for water infrastructure improvements, which is one of the one of the many eligible uses for the ARP stimulus money," said City Administrator Clint Gridley.



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It's photo contest time again
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Volunteers needed for Woodbury Days

The Woodbury Days Council is seeking volunteers for this year's annual community celebration Aug. 20-22 at Ojibway Park.

Volunteers are needed to greet guests, assist vendors, support the Grande Parade and answer questions at the information booth. Individuals, families and groups are welcome to volunteer. Individual volunteers must be 15 years of age or older.

All volunteers will receive a Woodbury Days T-shirt and gift of gratitude from Woodbury Days. Visit WoodburyDays.com and select the "Volunteer" link to learn more and sign up. Questions should be directed to volunteer@woodburydays.com.

Postal Patron
Woodbury, MN

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New playgrounds..from page 1

- **Menomini Park** - rehabbing pavement and replacing standards on existing basketball court.

Court maintenance:

- **City-wide** crack sealing on all other courts

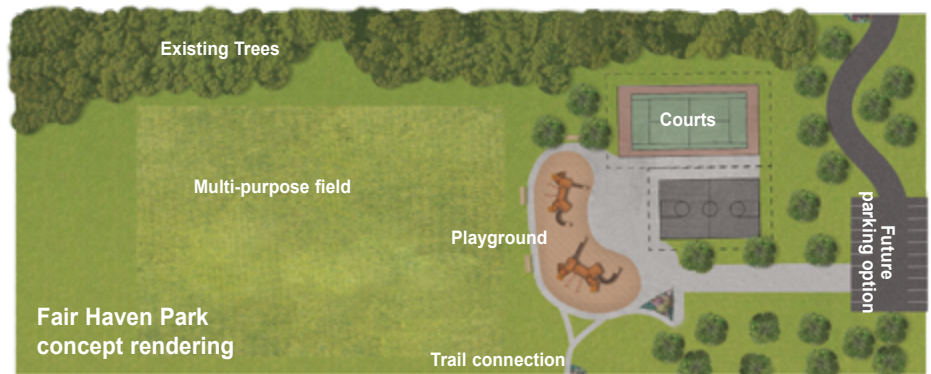
Playground replacements

- **Wedgewood Heights Park** - replacing the play structure with new playground designed for ages 5-12.
- **Menomini Park** - replacing the play structure with new playground designed for ages 5-12 years.
- **Trail reconstruction or additions:**
 - **Wimbledon Drive** near Pioneer Park (reconstruction)
 - **Evergreen West Park** near the park building (reconstruction)
 - **Lake Road** on either side of the I-494 overpass (reconstruction)

- **Powers Lake** trail loop on the south side of the lake (reconstruction)

- **Hudson Road near Woodduck Drive** (reconstruction in conjunction with the roadway rehabilitation project in the area)

- **New trails** added along Woodduck Drive and Landau Drive (reconstruction in conjunction with the roadway rehabilitation project in the area)
- **New trails** added along Rivertown Drive and Hudson Road (in conjunction with Woodbury Drive Improvement Project)
- **New trails** added along Karen Drive, Hudson Road and Settler's



Fair Haven Park will be constructed south of Dale Road and west of Woodbury Drive. Construction is slated to begin later this summer and be completed in October.

Ridge Parkway (in conjunction with Woodbury Drive Improvement Project)

- **New trails** added along Woodbury Drive and Dale Road (in conjunction with Woodbury Drive/Dale Road Improvement Project)

- **Lots of new trails** in Briarcroft, Compass Point, Oak Hill, Spencil

Hill and North Bluffs developments (new development additions)

More information about these park projects is available online at woodburymn.gov/parkprojects.

Contact Parks and Recreation at parks@woodburymn.gov or 651-714-3583 with questions.